



FASHION INTERNATIONAL

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION WORLD

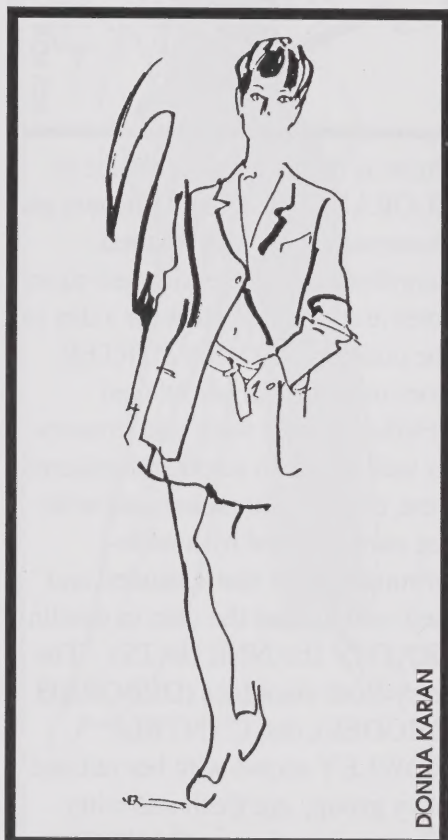
DECEMBER 1993

AH! YOUTH

The strongest theme during the New York Collections for Spring '94 was youth. The "errant school girl" or "good little bad girl" references were so prevalent during the shows that they left many members of the press asking where "are the wearable clothes?" Yet, looking at the pieces individually there's wearability, proving that a few designers did design for adults.

Several new trends emerge this season. The micro mini, dominating many of the shows, (though most of America will never wear their skirts that short), sent a loud and clear message — designers believe that consumers don't want to give up the above-the-knee length. Now they don't have to.

Bodies for Spring/Summer '94 pare down to a minimum. Shoulders are small, waist is loose but distinct, and the rest flows freely, generally in sheer silky fabrications for both skirts and pants. Focus is on the legs and waist, as high-cropped tops and vests pair with low slung bottoms. The midriff emerges as a new erogenous zone and belly button rings were on many of the top models.



RALPH LAUREN is one designer who focuses tastefully on the midsection. One group features navy silk Lycra from head-to-toe, paired with cropped leather vests and suede sarongs in several shades of brown. For evening, beautifully beaded midriff-baring camisoles work with silky batik sarongs, all in various tints of blue. Even his new casual collection RALPH, which premiered during fashion week, features high-cropped sweaters worn with pants and suspenders.

Another important trend of the season is layering. This is not just the usual vests over shirts but unconventional pieces such as slip dresses over ribbed tanks, short-sleeved tops worn over long, and

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KEEP IT SIMPLE

Accessories are taking a back seat for Spring '94. With the fashion emphasis on low key, pared down simplicity, the need for accessories diminishes considerably. Despite the exception of a well-placed cuff or a flash of silver at the neck, jewelry is minimal this season. The savvy customer will invest instead in a witty hat, a straw backpack, and a pair of cork platforms to anchor all those sheer and floaty layers. The key words

for Spring accessories are — keep it simple.

Straw is a given for Spring millinery. There are some witty Mad Hatter paglana straw hats (ANNE MOORE) banded in teal and rust striped ribbon at STEVEN STOLMAN — a perfect finishing touch for his printed linen coat and sage linen dress. While navy streamers on a navy straw stovepipe add a breezy touch to his navy pique

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strapless dress. Paglina straw combines with horsehair at PATRICIA UNDERWOOD in a smashing white, wide brimmed hat. Some of her other charmers include variegated straws, organza/paglina combos, and striped suede hats. A terrific new hat resource is CAROL CARR. Highlights include her coarse raffia with linen band and twigs/grapevine detailing, a lava green coarse raffia with handmade burlap flower, and a sporty distressed tobacco Panama with hand carved wood beads on a leather band. At MAGASCHONI, designer TRACY REESE pairs a jaunty cocoa, notched crown fedora, sporting a cocoa/white striped band (PATRICIA UNDERWOOD), with her cocoa Glen plaid suit with camisole beneath. The same hat appears in green with her mint julep crochet vest and '30s crepe pants — very Katherine Hepburn! In LAUREN SARA's cool and collected presentation, there's a



smashing sandstone wool gauze fly away jacket and pants shown with a natural sisal straw hat banded in raffia (LOLA). Her French vanilla crepe baratheia and silk georgette Nehru collared tunic atop matching slim pants is set off by a cabbage rose adorned Mad Hatter straw.

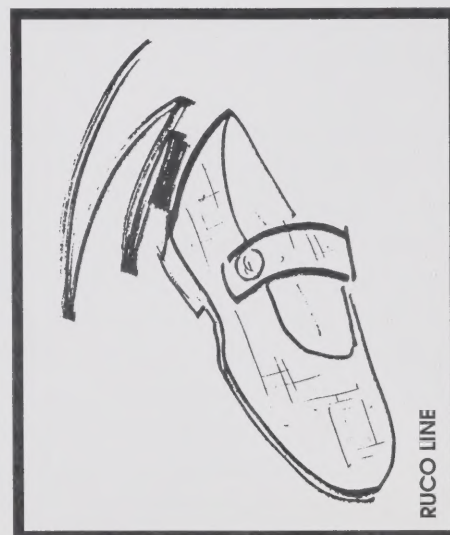


Straw is the material of choice at FLORADORA. Casual planters and Panamas in ivory and natural coordinate with lace trimmed straw totes and slides. Perfect for a day in the country. REGINA PORTER goes natural with her relaxed celedon V-neck tunic and trousers, as well as peach scroll embroidered vest, notch collar jacket, and wide leg pants, topped by a wide-brimmed straw that's banded and tied softly under the chin in muslin (KATHY JEANNE HATS). The terry cloth visor hats (DEBORAH RHODES), that CYNTHIA ROWLEY shows with her red and navy group, are fresh and witty. Best combination — ZANG TOI's navy pleated dress and schoolboy jacket, paired with clean white cotton berets and cotton satin newsboy caps by WHITTAL & SHON. The cotton moiré/damask beret coordinates with Zang's cream cotton moiré bolero, white cotton tee, and cream damask A-line wrap skirt with slit. A red newsboy cap reinforces the '70s mood of his red cotton shrunken cable zip-front cardigan, turtleneck, and black/white/red/pink striped A-line mini. There's an interesting juxtaposition at GHOST. They show a silver leather newsboy cap (STEPHEN JONES) with a range of lingerie

looks. The prettiest happens to be an aqua sprig embroidered halter neck dress that's a long bias float. After dark, a whimsical tiny blue satin hat atop the head complements a navy "slash border" cardigan, saffron "slash border" crop vest, and a navy diamond embroidered short skirt. DONNA HAAG goes for a black and white theme with her white linen jacket, with sailor collar, over wide trousers, topped by ERIC JAVITS' black straw hat with upturned brim. The hat pin on the brim is a sophisticated touch. Straw is the medium of choice at FRANCOIS VAYSSETTES. He combines paglina straw for the crown with a paglina edged horsehair brim, available in all natural or black. This season his trademark grosgrains are available in organic hues two-tone combinations. GEIGER offers one of the most adorable hats around — a natural straw top hat, banded in red and embellished with white and black felt flowers, that teams with a poppy boiled wool vest and orange slim cotton pants.

Spring's handbags are functional as well as attractive, with the upscale backpack an important shape. At ZYLA, there are cute white quilted cotton backpacks shown with his

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dressess worn over pants — layering for the sake of layering.

At CALVIN KLEIN, sheer tanks are worn on top of one another under jackets, over skirts, and on their own with strappy dresses. Interest arises in his variation and use of luxurious fabrics, such as one ensemble featuring a silk mousseline tank over silk raffia knit tank, worn with a linen gauze skirt and topped by an organza plisse coat.

OSCAR DE LA RENTA presents an elegant collection with elongated jackets and tunics over full pants. Most of his dresses, even the strapless, are full-length and worn open over pants. Morocco is the inspiration for many of the design elements, such as the scroll design in prints, and used as a braided trim on the majority of jackets.

Some of the best jackets are at ANNE KLEIN. Celebrating their 25th anniversary this year, the company has a new designer and a new attitude. Richard Tyler, who still designs a collection under his own name, puts the focus on the jacket. Paired with everything from jumpers to shorts, the jacket remains the one serious element, and is luxuriously detailed in super fine wools, linen, cottons, and silk blends. An olive stripe tropical wool 4-button jacket looks great with a cinnamon stripe silk shirt and olive plaid linen short kilt.

JENNIFER GEORGE, known for her spare design style, creates interest with fabric and cut. Tunics and cropped shirts in white silk gazaar, cut on the bias, pair with classic black trousers or silk/wool faille overalls. Empire tank dresses are in butterscotch suede, or cut on



the bias in pewter matte jersey.

CATHY HARDWICK has a similar "keep it simple" style using just a few interesting natural fabrics. The majority of the collection is in black, white, and cream, using distinctive fabrics, such as boiled linen, handkerchief linen, cotton and silk. Bodies include loose jackets, drawstring pants, bra tops, and A-line skirts.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is BILL BLASS. He uses a number

of fabrications in a variety of shapes and, this season, just about every one is a winner. His day suits are toned down and sophisticated in featherweight wools of cream and menswear prints. For evening, he's taken with a heavy lingerie influence using black lace from head-to-toe, such as a short black lace dress with lace overlays and lace stockings, and as insets and trim on a big floral print.

SCAASI, usually known for his prints, also toned down a bit. The few floral prints are relegated to daywear; while eveningwear, the majority of the collection, is easy and elegant in solid color groupings of primary black and white, navy or red. The last group, in celedon, is subtly feminine, with colorations such as rose and violet working in with the celedon.

Color, this season, is virtually non-descript. Neutrals or non-colors, dominate much of the daywear in cream, beige, and ivory. Black and white come to the forefront as strong accents, and are often worn together. Navy a classic for Spring, is noticeably rare although various other shades of blue are in every collection. When navy does appear, it is generally alone or occasionally, for a modern twist, paired with brown.

The news in color comes in the form of pastels. Not the sweet pinks or yellows of seasons past, but muted and natural "barely there" pastels that add just a hint of color. The London-based firm GHOST, presents a beautifully colored collection of sheer, flowing pieces. One ensemble is in shades of shell, aqua, sky, and pearl.

A STEP AHEAD OF THE REST

These six young designers really sparkle this season. They stand out not only for their creative approach, but their success in designing youthful, yet eminently wearable Spring collections.

ROBERT DANES continues to excel with his architecturally influenced collection of day-to-evening fashions. This season he uses stone linen, pale blue, turquoise, blush, silver, black or ivory silk and silk chiffon, blue iridescent silk, white silk gazaar, and oatmeal macramé to demonstrate his tailoring prowess. He tops a long slim linen skirt with a blue silk iridescent jacket accented with fabric curls at the neckline, and coordinates a stone linen scoop neck jacket with a short, flirty blue chiffon skirt. A gray silk gazaar tank top bares the midriff over a matching long, overlapping skirt; while a complex sheer white origami shirt with folded layers accents linen pants. That origami effect, used again in an abbreviated camisole, exposes the tummy when paired with a long slim black skirt. He places an oatmeal macramé vest over an iridescent blue bell-sleeved tunic and skirt, and pairs a silver silk short skirt (paneled into a multitude of V's at the hemline), with a white gauze long sleeved crop top. His sexy long black silk bias cut dress, cut away at the arms, features a halter neckline; while peach silk chiffon is transformed into a pretty fit'n flare gown.

TRACY REESE FOR MAGASCHONI derives her inspiration from the South and Jazz for her Spring collection: Groups



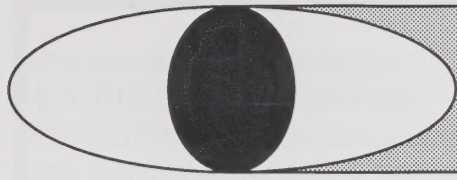
include such names as "Honky Tonk Blues" and "Boudoir," and feature such styles as a long fit'n flare ivory ribbed silk coat dress worn with silk pantaloons beneath, a long double-breasted fitted vest over matching palazzos, and a taupe silk pantsuit with a muted glen plaid softly fitted jacket. She also shows modified jodhpurs worn with a vest and a long fitted jacket, a stone pinafore with lace inset at the hem, and pinky brown silk crepe de chine tap pants with matching bra. This comes with a matching long wrap

skirt. There's also a yellow crocheted, belted tunic with yellow silk shorts, and another pair of shorts in indigo washed silk. The shorts team with a long duster in a similar color/fabric, punctuated with white edge stitching. There's an entire denim group in blue and dusty brown, and a short black crepe fit'n flare camisole dress with diamante button-front, along with a slinky sleeveless evening dress with high/low hem.

J.R. MORRISSEY, influenced by India in his well edited and saleable collection, shows ivory striped linen georgette, stone linen, beige silk mulberry, black matte jersey, and silver iridescent embroidered silk. Included in the collection is a short ivory striped linen georgette A-line halter dress, and a one-button, ivory long linen blazer, topping striped linen georgette, easy, elastic pants and matching crop camp shirt in beige. A long Nehru jacket teams with a crinkled silk T-shirt and easy gold Shami suede pants: That suede also becomes a baseball jacket, worn with mulberry silk slim pants and striped linen shirt. A sheer silver iridescent silk dress/tunic, featuring embroidery on its bell sleeves and bodice, pairs with matte jersey hot pants; while baring the midriff, a black matte jersey cropped T-shirt, juxtaposes with an ankle-grazing embroidered silk wrap skirt in a very sophisticated interpretation of the sari.

DONNA HAAG describes her collection as "fields of flax..." and that typical phrase sums up the mood perfectly. The collection is

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I-VIEW

INNOVATIONS

SEIKO has produced a new breakthrough product! Their Kinetic Quartz watch collection converts the motion of your wrist into electrical energy and stores it in a capacitor. This means, of course, that you and I will never have to run to the store for another battery—we may, however, develop muscles in our wrists. Water-resistant, with a case of stainless steel, the bezel is gold-tone, and the hands and markers luminous. It also includes a day-date window and a residual energy indicator. A good looking piece, it has a suggested retail price of \$395.00.

Contact: Seiko, Joe Whall, 201-512-3011. Press: Fleishman-Hillard Inc., 212-265-9150.

Move over QVC! Retailers who want to create an electronic, yet personal, shopping experience for customers should look into eShop. This is the first cross-platform shopping software (a single set of technologies or applications that reaches varied devices), allowing shopper access to personalized stores and malls through computers, TV's, personal communicators, and video game machines. The consumer experiences a 3-D visual: He enters a store and walks down the aisles, locating goods and getting information about them. This information includes product descriptions, specifications, video demonstrations, and product comparisons. All purchases can be charged, and the merchants can frequently update their products, prices, and store layouts. A customer service "plus" affords personalized recommendations based on the customer's buying history. Traditional retailers, catalogues, direct merchants, and vendors of news and information will be the suppliers included in eShop. This new technology, soon to be licensed by AT & T, premieres in mid-1994. Contact: eShop, 818-752-7816.

EXHIBITIONS

A must see exhibition, "Diana Vreeland: Immoderate Style," at The Metropolitan Museum's New Costume Institute, displays wonderful photographs, costumes and memorabilia. Propelling us into a world full of vibrant color and beauty, it includes fashions worn by her eclectic group of friends, a group of personal fashion favorites worn by Mrs. Vreeland, and Vogue layouts that take us from Paris, Russia, and the bull ring to nature's manifestations of power. The notion of nostalgia, that was abhorrent to this fashion dynamo, is conspicuously absent in this well researched and exquisitely produced exhibit. And, if you care to take some of its zest with you, on the way out buy the book, *Diana Vreeland: Immoderate Style*, by Costume Institute curator, Richard Martin, and associate curator, Harold Koda: Containing many documents never before published, it sells for \$75.00. (Open until 3/20/94) Contact: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 535-7710; Press, 570-3951.

"Flax Appeal," a fascinating exhibition at the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, traces linen from the Stone Age to the present. The overview, depicting the early uses of linen, reveals the tremendous range of needs it fulfilled. From the linen wrapped mummy, Coptic shrouds, 17th century caps, and 18th century lace flounces to acting as a base fabric for wonderful embroideries—linen's history astounds. Today towels, carpets, and fashions from designers such as Oscar de la Renta and Christian Francis Roth, continue to exemplify the flexibility and beauty of this textile. (Open until 1/15/94). Contact: International Linen Promotion, 685-0424.

The House of Harry Winston, one of the most prestigious jewelry empires in the country, recently entertained editors with a multitude of beautiful

pieces created by their principal designer, Ambaji Shinde. Shinde, a native of India, has been with Winston for 30 years. His design renderings, considered to be works of art, provide a record of the company's pieces, and are presently being considered for exhibition. Definitely, an exhibition we will be looking forward to! Contact: Harry Winston, 245-2000.

IN THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

We congratulate Gold Toe for contributing a portion of their hosiery sales to three internationally known children's charities — Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, Save the Children, and AmFar pediatric AIDS programs. The "Gold Toe Help Exchange" effective until December 31, asks the consumer, buying a three-pack of hosiery (for which Gold Toe donates \$1.00), to fill out and mail the attached card indicating the charity of their choice. If the consumer wishes to donate time to any of these charities, the packaging also displays a toll-free number to call to locate their local chapters—truly a noteworthy program. Contact: Gold Toe, 984-8931.

The fine organization K.I.D.S., the childrenswear, juvenile product, and toy industry charity, marks the season in a special way with holiday parties for disabled and chronically ill children. These bi-coastal parties will include gifts donated by member companies including Warner Brothers Worldwide Retail, OshKosh B'Gosh, Eden Toys, Noel-Joanna, Nutmeg, Kinney Shoes et al. Parents receive gifts from Revlon and Ralph Lauren. What a wonderful cooperative effort! Contact: Karen Bromley, 807-0878.



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JOYOUS AND PEACEFUL
HOLIDAY SEASON AND
A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

simply presented in black, white, ecru, tan, cream, rose, navy, and a multicolored picnic print. Her styles are crisp, yet feminine, in linen and handkerchief linen, cotton and cotton tapestry, silk, and faille. Examples include the ankle-length black handkerchief linen dress with keyhole cut-out front (complete with bow), accompanied by an easy long matching duster, and the white linen jacket with a sailor collar and French cuffs topping white linen palazzos. There is also a tan floral tapestry vest in cotton, with matching palazzos. This tapestry looks fabulous in a vintage-inspired, long fit'n flare jacket with waist peplum and matching short skirt. And — a pair of picnic print shorts makes a vivid impact with a rose bustier (complete with picnic print flowing peplum).

BADGLEY MISCHKA provide plenty of options in their collection, where styles and fabrics veer from vintage and textured to sheer, muted, and flowing. The palette encompasses ivory, carnation, clove, bronze, rose, pewter, silver, slate, peach, aqua, anthracite, garnet, midnight, and black. Fabrics are also diverse— cashmere, sueded silk crepe and embroidered washed silk, linen, crushed and pleated organza, beaded and antique beaded silk, silk and sheer knit, sequin chiffon, tulle, fishnet, lace, and stretch jersey. Drama is at a high point with a midnight ensemble comprising midnight flared pants and cashmere/jet fishnet tank, topped with a capacious jet fishnet and midnight cashmere cardigan. Another winner is the black tuxedo crepe jacket/coat dress with jet fishnet inset at the bodice and upper sleeves, worn with a black stretch tulle skirt. There's an entire group of very sophisticated ankle-grazing gowns, including a black stretch



jersey slinky number with jet beaded tassels swinging from the front and back neckline, a black jersey knit long sleeve column with diagonal lace hem inset, and a lovely black fitted sleeveless gown with diagonal spirals of inset lace, also in a jersey knit. They also feature an entrance making slip dress in heirloom wildflower beaded silk chiffon with halter, low back neckline and beaded black/silver lace underneath.

HUBERT FRANCO shows an excellent grasp of what American women want to wear. Colors such as blush, gray, camel, olive, black, boysenberry, sand, steel, opaline, iridescent orange/olive/lilac/mist and leaf, ivory, pink, white and powder blue are featured in crepe, ribbed jersey, sheer jersey, liquid mesh, and chiffon with detailing that includes lacing. Three of the collection's highlights include a black crepe sarong jacket, fluidly

draped into a curved hem, that tops matching high-waisted trousers, an olive crepe pantsuit, elegantly comprising cut-away cardigan jacket with long "slit" sleeves, and an olive cross draped liquid mesh halter, saucily revealing the midriff above easy matching pants. Olive and ivory crepe are color blocked in a short, swing-skirted dress, complete with neckline ruffle. A tunic dress, in boysenberry ribbed knit, features sheer sleeves, laced down the back, topping easy matching sheer pants. A green crepe long, easy vest tops a white cotton shirt with over long slit cuffs and green crepe shorts; while a baby doll dress in powder blue crepe and iridescent lilac features pearl stitching detail. Providing a solution to the sheer problem is the knockout iridescent mist, pearl stitched chiffon column gown, lined in silk at the appropriate areas of the anatomy.

white net tank and voile boxers. **MULTIPLE CHOICE** goes high tech with black mesh backpacks and totes. Another strong style is the white or straw "chair" caning tote with inside key ring snap. The backpack style is also available in a rugged bark cloth. **INGE CHRISTOPHER** introduces a roomy antique rattan and woven leather vertical tote. With a braided leather shoulder strap and large outside pocket, it's great for the working woman! The popular "Midas" group of plastic coated fabric bags come up with a winner for Spring — the large sling bag in ivory, navy or gold. **GEMMA KAHNG** designs a zippy hot pink patent backpack to go with her yellow linen lapel jacket and matching georgette slip dress. It also adds zing to a lime green linen sundress. At **ESPRIT**, the city pack, a small scaled down backpack, is one of the hottest new silhouettes in all its fabrications, from linen to straw. Also noteworthy here are madras plaid print raffia bags in primitive vegetable dye colorations. The small drawstring, boxy satchel, and drawstring sling are enhanced by the laced edges.

In keeping with the natural trend this season, hosiery and shoe designers are emphasizing environmentally inspired colors and textures. Look for "recycled" roll top socks, boot socks, sheer cotton socks and tights, lacy leggings and socks, and ethnic influences from India to Native American motifs, plus eclectic hippie "street looks." Legwear color runs the gamut from ash, earth, oatmeal, and stone to barley, cedar, pebble, saffron, and orange. At **HOT SOX**, the raw earth colors in their "Naturals" range are special. Outstanding are the zigzag mesh (Tactel/Lycra), microfiber

trouser socks, and floral bouquet trouser socks. From the "Nirvana" group, there are exotic Indian inspired Bombay floral tapestry socks and the sunburst patterned rayon trouser socks. **RALPH LAUREN** shows the important thigh high socks in white, bone and black, and cotton/linen combinations in offbeat colors and in fine or coarse gauge. For the season's baby doll dresses, there are charming crochet-edged anklets in cotton/wool blends. **NICOLE MILLER** pairs opaque black thigh high stockings (**KAREN BELL**), with laced up sling back platform pumps (**STEWART WEITZMAN**), and parades them down the catwalk with short black stretch matte jersey dresses. At **HUE**, the organic cotton popcorn textured socks in oat and natural are meant to darken with each washing — fabulous! There's more excitement with their pebble stitch tights in sage, navy or straw and the subtle lace leggings in black or natural. **RACHEL LONDON** trims her thigh high white lace stockings with white carnations and offers them with a white gauze halter baby doll dress.

HUSH PUPPIES heads west for Spring with surprisingly sophisticated suede moccasins in a rainbow of desert inspired tints. For casual weekend wear, **WOLVERINE WILDERNESS** boots and shoes, designed with patented DuraShocks comfort and waterproof technology, combine comfort with fashion. Clunky is in at **STEVE MADDEN LTD.** There are variations on the "Gucci" platform clog, granny boots, classic suede oxfords, and rope soled wedges, all in a neutral color scheme. At **STEPHAN KELIAN STUDIO**, shoes come in nubuck/linen combinations. Also hot are laced up-to-the-knee granny

boots on lug soles, and platform oxfords. **ROSE MARIE WOULFE** shows pretty buckled pilgrim shoes in beige suede (**ECCO-SACCO**), with her butter yellow silk pique long and fluid car coat (with ruffled cuffs) and matching trousers. **GIRAUDON**'s shoes feature a decidedly retro look with '40s platform pumps. There's also a striking oxford in a natural linen/black leather combination. City sandals come in either dark brown or black. **CALVIN KLEIN** pairs a sisal linen suit, with gauze and silk mousseline tank tops layered over each other, with chunky black strapped leather platform city sandals. He anchors an elegant clay wool crepe twill pantsuit with simple black platform slides. The **UTILITY SHOE & BOOT CO.** has a range of slides and platforms in natural linen as well as lug soled high top sneakers in brown, natural, and navy. **RUCO LINE** shows elegant ivory linen slip-ons and Mary Janes, and natural cotton/Lurex lace-up casuals that hug the foot. Both are perfect for work and weekends. At **SIGERSON MORRISON FOOTWEAR**, there's a versatile gillie slide in mushroom suede for the fashion forward customer, and classic two-toned penny loafers in brown leather with natural linen. At **CHAUSSURES EDER PARIS**, the hot styles are the cork/suede platform sandals and the denim blue high top canvas espadrilles. **HIRICA** offers a variety of espadrilles. Best — the lace-up "Derby" in natural beige.

Jewelry is minimal for Spring. With clothes stripped down to their essence, so too is ornamentation. Here and there cuffs appear, and the occasional strand of beads, preferably in natural wood or silver. The

"KEEP IT SIMPLE" continued from page 7

latter is a definite trend. Look for silver to become the new neutral this season, in belts, jewelry, leather goods, and leather clothing. With the waffle weave knit group, in navy and white, BETTINA RIEDEL offers oversized Lucite crosses suspended from black cords (PATRICIA VON MUSULIN). With a simple wrapped jumpsuit in crepe, she shows wide carved wood bangles and a long sculptural wood pendant, again suspended from a long cord. FERNANDO SANCHEZ shows armfuls of Moroccan wood bangles with a clean white cotton damask vest and drawstring pants. Ethnic is in at J.R. MORRISSEY. Here are unusual wide ribbed silver bangles (SARAJO), setting off a smart linen blazer, cropped silk mulberry camp shirt and striped linen georgette pants. "East Indian" silver necklaces layer over a matte jersey cropped tee that tops an embroidered silk noil wrap skirt. This is also worn with bold silver cuffs. A clever silver link I.D. choker adds just the right note to JOAN VASS' black mini cardigan and black/white "Bali" pants. With a sexy group of knit "arachnid" dresses, there are silver link chain necklaces that end in silver locks (VASS-LUDACER), worn

"AH! YOUTH" continued from page 3

Something else that we haven't seen in quite a while is iridescence. DONNA KARAN does it best with a collection that features unusual fabrications with shine. Reflective triacetate, silk cellophane, liquid metal taffeta and metallic knits are in silver or white, and pair with matte jersey, tissue wool, or silk/linen pieces. Shapes are modern with a number of jackets paired with micro minis, tie-front skirts and drawstring pants, all using the bodysuit as a base.

ISAAC MIZRAHI, who's built a

three at a time for maximum impact. ADRIENNE VITTADINI proves once again that she's queen of knits with a smashing collection. A group of Indonesian inspired separates in brown/brick are accented with long ropes of brown wood beads layered around the neck. One of the cleverest ideas is her use of "tortoise" sunglasses, suspended from thick tortoise link chains. Perfect with a handkerchief linen spaghetti strapped chemise and coat, or worn slung to one side of a terrific patchwork linen beige plaid A-line mini skirt and cropped sweater. She revives suspenders (as do others this season — from Tracy Reese to Richard Tyler), in spanking white, and pairs them with her matching crop sweater and knit mini skirt. Belts look lively at NAVA. Best are their "cork" belts with matte gold buckles, and the chain belts with faux tortoise bead embellishment. The look throughout is clean, sporty, saleable. At BYRON LARS, the belt takes center stage. A wide cinch black leather belt sets off a white jacquard pantsuit that effects a Mandarin Chinese appearance. His lipstick cartridge/white leather belt combination (REVLON) buckles around the hip — pure fun with a red striped halter shirt dress that's long and flared

reputation of presenting the unexpected, creates a sensible collection that's wearable and even environmentally-friendly. For day he offers options galore, from short empire dresses to wide-legged trousers with suspenders. Here, jackets are also superb and range in inspiration from the Marx Brothers to the American farmer. A winning ensemble is the short double-breasted rowboat jacket, in viscose/linen, worn with silk gazaar shirt and schoolgirl skirt. On the environmental side, short evening shifts, made of paillettes from recycled aluminum cans, he refers to as "Rubbish a la mode."

Other outstanding accessories include the wide hammered gold cuff shown with LOUIS FERAUD's smart tan linen great shirt and slim pants, and BADGLEY MISHKA's gorgeous latticework beading on a honey washed silk gown. The blonde Venetian glass beads form a bib effect. At SCAASI BOUTIQUE, a magnificent one-shoulder tucked and pleated white silk crepe gown gets a pearl/gold belt and large crystal/gold flower earrings (KENNETH JAY LANE). His lovely celedon beaded, embroidered lace tunic and matte jersey pants are shown with pastel crystal drop earrings. OSCAR DE LA RENTA stops the show with an iridescent paillette woven stripe shirt over ivory chiffon pants, paired with long ropes of seed pearls. The pearls also accessorize a diaphanous striped embroidered long jacket and chiffon pants in white.

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